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INFO RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0868  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0026  
RHMFIS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 2010

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 000361

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FOR IO/UNP AND EAP/ANP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 9/1/2016

TAGS: PREL UNSC PP

SUBJECT: PNG UNDERSTANDS BUT CAN'T COMMIT ON VENEZUELA

REF: PORT MORESBY 65

CLASSIFIED BY: Robert Fitts, Ambassador, U.S. Embassy Port  
Moresby, Department of State.

REASON: 1.4 (d)

1.(C) SUMMARY: PNG staffers understand the undesirability of having Venezuela on the UNSC. However, they cannot commit as to their government's final position. The mercurial Prime Minister is acting Foreign Minister and may well make up his mind himself. END SUMMARY

2.(C) Amb raised U.S. concerns over the non-permanent Latin American seat on the UNSC with the Prime Minister's acting Chief Secretary September 1. That official, Viali Vagi, is generally

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very cooperative with U.S. initiatives. He readily agreed that the UN needed to move on many vital fronts rather than waste time with posturing and bickering. The recent play given to the Chavez visit to Syria while Syria was refusing to cooperate with the new UNIFIL mandate was another case in point. Vagi undertook to discuss our concerns with Somare. He did note that the PRC position would be important.

3.(C) Comment: As with then-Foreign Minister Namaliu (reftel) the staffers take our point. However, Somare now has control of the Foreign Affairs portfolio while remaining remote to discussion of most foreign affairs business. We hear that he might appoint a new Foreign Minister to head PNG's delegation at UNGA, which he will eschew in favor of the NAM meetings in Cuba followed by Clinton Foundation meetings in New York. That would give us another interlocutor to work on. However, Somare will presumably hear of the UNSC seat in Havana and may well decide this on his own. He has recently been cultivating a penchant for taking a poke at established powers.

FITTS